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## **EPA Releases the Update to the Administrator's Superfund Emphasis List, Takes Lead Responsibility for Cleanup at New Jersey Zinc/Mobil Chemical Corp. Superfund Site in DePue, Illinois**

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DEPUE, ILLINOIS (October 30, 2019) – Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced the seventh update to the Administrator's Emphasis List of Superfund Sites targeted for immediate, intense action. This latest update adds the DePue (New Jersey Zinc) site in DePue, Illinois.

"All Americans deserve timely action on Superfund site cleanups in their communities – not delays," **said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler**. "We will continue to advance or accelerate Superfund cleanups across the country by addressing issues that cause site-specific delays."

Illinois EPA has been overseeing cleanup of the DePue site to date but requested that U.S. EPA assume the role as lead agency because negotiations with responsible parties had reached an impasse. Under federal Superfund law, U.S. EPA has additional authorities to help leverage completion of the cleanup. The Administrator's Emphasis List milestone is to negotiate and reach agreement with the PRPs to conduct the cleanup at the site's Operable Unit 4 by Feb. 1, 2020.

"The shared goal for U.S. EPA and the Illinois EPA is to get this cleanup completed as soon as possible," **said U.S. EPA Regional Administrator Cathy Stepp**. "Working in partnership with Illinois and with support from the village of DePue, we will do everything in our power to make that happen."

"We would like to thank U.S. EPA for agreeing to continue the focus Illinois EPA has placed on the residential cleanup, and the Agency remains committed to working on the complete site in a support role," **said Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim**. "We encourage U.S. EPA to maintain the strong relationship the Illinois EPA has built with the Village of DePue."

U.S. EPA will continue the Illinois EPA's emphasis on accelerating soil cleanups at residential properties in DePue, especially at homes with sensitive populations. Last week, U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA briefed DePue Mayor Eric Bryant regarding the plan for the transfer of authority. Representatives from both agencies also met with members of DePue's community advisory group to discuss the current status of the site and the transition.

The agencies will soon announce a date for a public meeting to discuss the path forward in more detail with residents.

To learn more about the site, visit: [www.epa.gov/superfund/depue-newjersey-zinc](http://www.epa.gov/superfund/depue-newjersey-zinc).

Illinois EPA's webpage on the site, including site fact sheets, can be found at:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/community-relations/sites/new-jersey-zinc/Pages/default.aspx>.

## **Background**

U.S. EPA established the Administrator's Emphasis List in December 2017 in response to recommendations from U.S. EPA's Superfund Task Force. The list is comprised of sites identified by Administrator Wheeler and U.S. EPA regional offices that will benefit from the administrator's immediate attention or action. Each site on the list has a short-term milestone to provide the basis for tracking the site's progress.

The list serves as a mechanism to address specific milestones that may cause delays in a site's cleanup progress. U.S. EPA considers removing a site from the list once the milestone is achieved and the cleanup activities at that site are back on track. The list is updated quarterly with sites moving on and off the list as needed. Removal from the Administrator's Emphasis List does not change the site's status on the NPL.

U.S. EPA remains committed to addressing risks at all Superfund sites, not just those on the Administrator's Emphasis List. U.S. EPA continues to accelerate progress at all Superfund sites across the country.

The updated Administrator's Emphasis List is available on the agency's website at <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/administrators-emphasis-list>.

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